## INSIDE WASHINGTON

## Democrats Back Chief of CIA

By ROBERT S. ALLEN and -JOHN A. GOLDSMITH

WASHINGTON - Presidentelect Richard M. Nixon is being strongly urged to retain careerman Richard Helms in his pres. ent job as head of the evercontroversiai Central Intelligence

Johnson in 1866, has been with was established in 1947. His retention would go far towards nailing down a precedent for nonpolitical, career directors of Centrad Intelligence.

Some of the keep Helms sentiment is being relayed to Nixon by Democratic lawmakers. They contend that the top CIA job has never been treated as a patronage plum.

They are right that, by accident or by design, no President has ever made a purely partisan appointment of a CIA director. Three of the six CIA heads to date have, in fact, been military men, insulated by their profession from partisan politics.

An all but forgotten Naval of ficer, Rear Adm. Roscoe Hillen Polaris submarine program and koetter, was the first director of Central Intelligence. He had been the head of a predecessor ind-Egence agency and was appointed. by President Truman in 1947, when Congress established the

President Eigenhower appointed his World War chief of staff. Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, to suceced Hillenkoolter in 1950. In 1953 Eisenhower appointed Allen W. Dulles as the first civilian di-rector of Central Intelligence, succeeding Smith.

At that time Dulles had an extensive intelligence background. He had been active in the study process which led to the creation of a civilian agency to coordinate all the government's intelligence activities. President Kennedy, as

In 1961, after the ill-faled Bay of Pigs adventure, Democrati Kennedy named a Republican, John A. McCone, to succeed Dulles. McCone had been under secretary of the Air Force and a member of the Atomic Energy Commission in the Dischhower Administration.

President Johnson named an other military man. Adm. Wil-Helms, appointed by President Mam F. Raborn, as McCone's successor in 1985. Helans was CIA since the big spy agency named as Rabom's deputy at that time. He was elevated to the top job when Raborn left it a year later.

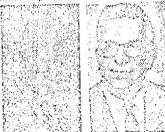
No mention was made of Helims' politics when he appeared before the Senate Armed Service Committee at the time of his appointment in 1965 and, are stressing the desnrability of again, in 1986. His career sumcareer continuity to CIA. They many made it clear that he had

never held a political job.

A reporter in Europe helore World War II. Helms became an invelligence officer during the war. He has been in military and civilian intelligence jobs ever

He had been serving as CIA's deputy director for plans under McCone when he was selected for the number two spot with Raborn, who had been the expediter of the highly successful let it be known, at the outset. unar he would stay in CIA for only a short period.

The transition from the harddriving, spade-calling McCone to short-timer Raborn was a diffi cust one for CIA, and the elevation of one of their own was hailed by the agencys' careerists.



Coldsmille

The law which created CIA bars appointment of milliary men

Approved For Release 2001/03/07% CIA RDF31-00904R000500180010-6 as requiring a civilian deputy

for an officer director, and vice versa, If President Nixon sets a career precedent by retaining Helms, the intelligence community, as presently constituted, would seem to have no lack of career talent.

Even the CIA critics agree that it has assembled an able group of employes at its nearby Langley, Va. headquarters and in overseas posts around the world. On the military side, there is the billion-dollar Defense Intelligence Agency, which coordinates separate Army, Navy and Air Force intelligence services. In addition, there is the super, secret National Security Agency, which specializes in codes, crypt graphy and other electronic intell ligence.

Helms' performance as CIA chief and the performance of the agency under his direction is difficult to assess. No government operation in the world is under as steady a drumfire of criticism as CIA, but the agency gets generaily high marks from the insiders who are familiar with the intelligence estimates which it produces.

Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford testified earlier this fall that U. S. intelligence operations have improved "substantially" in recent years. He said he accepts. and believes the intelligence community's appraisals of Soviet nuclear strength and thinks there is "a higher degree of agreement' in the intelligence community about such national esti-

Except for an early misunder standing with Sen. J. William Fulloright, D.Ark., chairman of the Sonate Foreign Relations Committee, Hebrs has had excellent relations with Congress and the House and Senate committees which ride herd on CIA activipies. Generally, Helms has, as he promised in 1966, kept CIA out of foreign policy making.

ChA operations came under fire most recently after the recent invasion of Czechoslovakia by troops from Russia and other nations of the Warsaw pact. Critios contended that ChAs' warnings of such a move were deficient.

Congressional military experis. who looked carefully into those complaints, say CLA correctly charted the pre-invasion moves of the Warsaw pact armies and reported the possibility of a move into Czechoslovakia. Missing was the definite word that the Kromhad decided to invade, and

whether CIA could to get that highly-hold informaSTATINTL